

"multitasking," long before such a phrase had even been coined. Modern appliances make mothers even more efficient, simultaneously washing and drying clothes while cleaning the house, making dinner, keeping up with the news, and monitoring their children's homework. In today's busy world, working mothers must master such multitasking, and many do it with amazing dexterity, juggling work and family and all of their children's outside activities with all of the skill of a circus act. You know how it goes. Mothers are also the lifeblood of many activities important to their children, from scouting to athletics, parent-teacher associations to Sunday school, music lessons to swim teams. The phrase "soccer mom"—have you heard that phrase? It accurately reflects a wide swath of American culture.

And still mothers find time to nurture, to cuddle, to listen, to heal, and to teach. Henry Ward Beecher observed that "the mother's heart is the child's schoolroom." Think about that. This is surely true, for with every action, every look, every word, be they soft and loving or briskly authoritative, mothers teach their children.

Their influence upon the world is incalculable. George Washington, the first President of our great country, that great general who fought at Valley Forge, said:

My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her.

Abraham Lincoln said:

I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.

He also said:

All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.

Andrew Jackson noted about his mother:

There was never a woman like her. She was gentle as a dove and brave as a lioness. . . . The memory of my mother and her teachings were, after all, the only capital I had to start life with, and on that capital I have made my way.

Booker T. Washington. Let's hear what he said. He said:

In all my efforts to learn to read, my mother shared fully my ambition and sympathized with me and aided me in every way that she could. If I have done anything in life worth attention, I feel sure that I inherited the disposition from my mother.

The leaders of our future are being molded and shaped right now by their mothers. It is hard to imagine that those small faces being wiped clean by their mother's hand might someday smile at us from the Oval Office, or that those chubby fingers might someday operate dangerous machinery. But that childish confidence is fostered by their mother's love, urged on by her unwavering support, and raised up by her tender sympathy. Their mother's support will give them the wings to fly high and to achieve great success.

I am sure that these future leaders will someday echo the words of Washington, Lincoln, and Jackson in crediting their mothers for their success—their angel mothers.

I have no recollections of my mother. She died on Armistice Day 1918. She told the faithful couple who raised me: Take the baby—I was a baby—and three older brothers and a sister. Take the baby. Keep him as your own. And she went away. I am sure that her prayers have followed me and that today she looks down from Heaven waiting. I don't remember seeing her in this life, but I shall have the opportunity to see her someday.

Every child deserves a mother worthy of such sentiments. And as a nation, we are fortunate to possess so many wonderful mothers.

There is a poem called "Mother's Love" that I would like to recite at this moment. "Mother's Love":

Her love is like an island  
In life's ocean, vast and wide;  
A peaceful, quiet shelter  
From the wind, the rain, the tide.  
'Tis bound on the north by Hope,  
By Patience on the West,  
By tender counsel on the South,  
And on the East by Rest.  
Above it like a beacon light  
Shine Faith, and Truth, and Prayer;  
And thro' the changing scenes in life  
I find a haven there.

Mr. President, my own dear mother waits for me.

I would like to reflect on this great old poem, "Rock Me To Sleep," and I dedicate it—it is not my poem, but it is the one I love—I dedicate it to my dear wife Erma, who was a wonderful mother to her children, and to all the mothers throughout this broad land. Let us think of them. They thought of us. They rocked us. They gave us comfort. They nurtured us. Think of them, the mothers of America.

Backward, turn backward, O time, in your flight,

Make me a child again just for to-night!  
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,  
Take me again to your heart as of yore;  
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,  
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;

Over my slumbers your loving watch keep;  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Backward, flow backward, oh, tide of the years

I am so weary of toil and of tears—  
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain—  
Take them, and give me my childhood again!  
I have grown weary of dust and decay—  
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away,  
Weary of sowing for others to reap;—

Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,  
Mother, O Mother, my heart calls for you!  
Many a summer the grass has grown green,  
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:  
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,

Long I to-night for your presence again.  
Come from the silence so long and so deep;—  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Over my heart in the days that are flown,  
No love like mother—love ever has shown;  
No other worship abides and endures—  
Faithful, unselfish, and patient like yours:

None like a mother can charm away pain  
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.

Slumber's soft calms o'er my heavy lids creep;—

Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,

Fall on your shoulders again as of old;  
Let it drop over my forehead to-night,  
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;  
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more  
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;  
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep:—

Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!  
Mother, dear Mother, the years have been long

Since I last listened your lullaby song:  
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem  
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.  
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,  
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,

Never hereafter to wake or to weep;  
Rock me to sleep, Mother—rock me to sleep!

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, what is the order now?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the Chair. I will proceed in morning business.

#### AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, last Friday, May 5, at the invitation of Senator LANDRIEU, I went down to New Orleans, LA, for a second trip to the State since the hurricane. I wanted to have a chance to be able to get around the city, meet with people, and measure the recovery effort up close and personally now that we are 8½ months since Hurricane Katrina.

Let me, first of all, express my gratitude to Senator LANDRIEU who has been tireless, as I know Senator VITTER has. They both have been pushing hard for their State, as they ought to. But I particularly want to thank Senator LANDRIEU who spent the day with me and who, together with me, sat through a small business roundtable with a great many small businesspeople in New Orleans who were struggling to make things work in the aftermath of the hurricane.

She took me around New Orleans East, and we drove through on the interstate, able to see on both sides of the interstate the still-current state of abandonment of so much of the city. The statistics somehow don't really convey what is happening there and what is not happening there.

I know Washington is a tough place to make anything mean anything right now. We are caught up in an awful lot

of partisanship, and there is a lot of back and forth and not a whole lot that is going on legislatively as a consequence of that, though we all hope there is going to be a breakthrough on the immigration bill in the next days. But I have to tell my colleagues that somehow we have to find a way to break through on the reality of what is happening to a whole bunch of folks down in New Orleans and on the gulf coast, whose lives have been disrupted, who have all the hope in the world of being able to return to their homes but increasingly are finding a lagging effort and a bureaucracy and other kinds of problems standing in their way. That has a huge cost—a huge cost. Before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Louisiana had 86,000 small businesses, employing more than 850,000 people and contributing \$22 billion to the local economy. Of those 86,000 small businesses, 71,000 were in the disaster zones, and nearly 20,000 were catastrophically destroyed. More than 365,000 residents were left homeless. But those statistics 8½ months later do not tell the story of New Orleans.

I thought I was going to go down there and I was going to see this incredible burst of energy of the cleanup, unbelievable numbers of folks out in the streets loading trucks and moving debris and doing things. But instead what I saw in New Orleans East and, most importantly, what I heard from people who are there struggling to make ends meet, to make this work, stunned me as to how little organized, fundamental activity is still taking place 8½ months after New Orleans was devastated.

When I went to New Orleans the first time in the immediate days after the hurricane, I saw a region that was damaged by a storm but at that point in time still very strong in spirit. I saw people determined to turn things around and to make it work. I talked to people who proved their resilience and their love of their State when they committed themselves to not just not giving up, but to not leaving, to rebuilding their homes and their businesses. On that trip I met people who felt that if the words of the Federal Government and the State and the city were, in fact, followed through on, they had hope for the future.

On this trip that I just made a week ago, I met with small business CEOs. I met with people who have spent a lifetime there who are beginning to feel a kind of despair about the lack of presence of real leadership that is changing their lives for the better. As I went down streets, I saw street after street after street filled with debris, garbage bags just out in the streets, cars with the word "tow" on them waiting to be towed. Eight and a half months later, we can't tow cars.

Where were the trucks lined up with people loading them up with the debris being taken out? I expected to see a backed-up line of trucks with an enormous burst of energy. No such thing.

I met people in New Orleans who are increasingly afraid, angry, and disillusioned. I was reminded by small business owners and homeowners last week that New Orleans doesn't only have a hurricane problem, New Orleans has a levee problem. And the levee problem is more than just a problem of the levees that broke, it is an overall levee problem. And if that levee problem were addressed with the speed—I know there are some who say, well, we just allocated additional money and this and that. I tell you, we are building bases in Iraq a lot faster than we are rebuilding New Orleans, and we are putting more energy into saying we will stay the course there than we are staying the course in New Orleans.

Too little has been done in any kind of rapid fashion to help deal with those levees with respect to the hurricane season that starts in just a few weeks. I left New Orleans convinced that the gulf coast doesn't have a morale problem, but I will tell you what: Washington and the community there have a leadership problem, and it is up to us to change it before it is too late. I want to explain that.

We all understand the response immediately after Hurricane Katrina, and there is a lot on the record about who did what, and so forth. I don't want to go back to that. That is not what this is about. But what is most distressing to me is that after that lesson was supposed to have been learned, the people I met in New Orleans told me they were fed up with empty promises that have followed the initial shock of what happened at the Superdome. They believe the promises have been broken and more mistakes have been made after they had been promised that mistakes weren't going to be repeated.

What I heard from people on a very personal level is that schools are overcrowded, that parents are struggling to hold on because they want to stay there, but they don't know if they can. There is an enormous personal anxiety that takes a toll day after day after day as people are living like that.

One of the businesses I visited is a linen and laundry business that used to take care of all of the hospitals in the region. Well, now there is only one trauma center open. They are paying more employees than there is work because they want to try to keep the employees there, but the CEO just left last week. He took his family and left New Orleans. Gone because they don't see the revitalization taking place that they need.

Across the way from that particular business was another business: Tommy's Seafood. He has been there a long time. He bought a new building. The new building was mortgaged. The new building was hurt, damaged in the winds. So he gets the insurance check, but guess what. The insurance check is made out to the bank. So the bank gets the money and the building still has to be fixed.

That is not what we intended in the U.S. Congress. That is not what dis-

aster assistance is supposed to do in a smart way. There are all kinds of examples like this where people are waiting for SBA loans, trying to get the loans. They can't get the loans. More loans have been denied than have been granted. Out of \$9 billion—the administration says: Well, we have given \$9 billion in loans. Guess what. Only \$1 billion of that \$9 billion has actually gone out to people.

On September 15, the President spoke to the Nation from Jackson Square, and he made a series of promises. Here is what he said:

Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes. We will stay as long as it takes to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives. When the streets are rebuilt, there should be many new businesses, including minority-owned businesses, along those streets. When the houses are rebuilt, more families should own, not rent, those houses. When the regional economy revives, local people should be prepared for the jobs being created.

Over 8 months later—over 8 months later—history is repeating itself. Too little has been provided in real response, and a lot of time has been wasted without real solutions for getting the gulf coast back to business. Eight months after the President stood in Jackson Square, there aren't trucks massively lined up, hauling this debris out of the city and garbage out of the city. In fact, there seems to be very little activity from the Federal Government.

I know the President has been down there 12 times. That is what they will tell you very quickly. They will tell you about the amount of aid that has flowed into the region. We will talk about that in a minute. The fact is, the piles of debris that remain standing before every building are an unbelievable reminder of the devastation to people, but they also stand as a blockade, as a barrier to the ability of businesses to get going, to the ability of people to be able to come back and figure out what they are doing with their homes. The more they see that, the more a homeowner sees that kind of debris just stuck there, the more they begin to say: This "ain't" happening. I am out of here. I am out of here.

Local officials told me they have fears that mosquitoes and rodents are carrying diseases as a result of the piles of garbage on the streets. In the richest country on the face of the Earth, we shouldn't have Americans abandoned to the worry that their children are going to be at risk for Third World health problems because Washington didn't meet its most basic obligations to those citizens. More than \$10 billion in contracts have been awarded for debris removal, emergency response, and reconstruction efforts, but where is it? Tens of thousands of abandoned cars are still littering different streets. There is garbage, hurricane debris, trash in front of virtually every home or business that I saw. Most of those homes are abandoned still, obviously.

Katrina pulled back the curtain, and it revealed poverty and squalor that many didn't believe could exist in our country. But 8 months later, after people said no more and never again, and the cameras went away to a large degree, those images are still there on the streets of New Orleans.

I don't know any Americans who remember what they saw in the Superdome who feel that their dues have been totally paid by making a one-time contribution to the Red Cross. And in the same way, when you look at what the Federal Government response is, people in New Orleans are left wondering whether we have come to a different conclusion.

Eight months after the President promised the revitalization of new, small, minority-owned businesses, the businesspeople who have shown great courage staying in New Orleans are literally fighting to keep their doors open in the face of such a slow and woefully inadequate Federal response. Orleans Parish, which is the center of Louisiana's economy, had 12,695 small businesses employing 245,000 people before August 29 of last year. Today, it is estimated that only a little more than 2,000 of the 12,600 have opened. Where is our response? Those businesses need people to sell things to and people need a place to live.

The President seems to mean something when he speaks about staying the course in Iraq, but it doesn't appear as if we are staying the course down in New Orleans, notwithstanding the money that has been allocated. It takes more than money. It takes a strong leader who is rolling up his sleeves and bringing people together and organizing all of these contractors and different efforts in a way that maximizes both the volunteer and paid effort of the United States of America.

One person I spoke with confirmed what I could see with my own eyes. One person said to me—this is a professional who has spent years down there, whose home is there, who helped rescue people, who stayed through the whole thing, and he was rescuing people in boats blocks away from his house. He said: Basic services in 70 percent of the city don't exist. In those areas, there is no fire protection, police presence is minimal, there is garbage, hurricane debris, trash in front of all of the homes. Billions have been spent. Yet the city is piled high with debris of every kind.

Those are his words. Those are his words.

The residents of New Orleans are beginning to put their hopes elsewhere. That is what is happening. Maybe some people want that to happen. That is a question that ought to be asked. They are starting to put their future in a new place. Over 3,400 private homes are for sale in New Orleans, more than at any other time since we started tracking this indicator 6 weeks after Katrina made landfall. This is up from approximately 2,800 homes that were for sale

in February, and it is the highest number since October of 2005.

Jim Funk, who is CEO of the Louisiana Restaurant Association, said the pre-Katrina restaurant workforce of New Orleans has been reduced from 133,000 to 22,000. Only 1,500 of the almost 3,500 pre-Katrina restaurants are back open. Of course, restaurants need people and need workers. The unemployment rate of those who remain displaced jumped to nearly 35 percent in March, a 54-percent increase from the month before. Unemployment is up 54 percent from the month before, even though we are supposed to be putting people back to work.

I met Pat Murphy, who owns United Cab. United Cab is a 66-year-old business. He spoke at our roundtable. After wading through redtape and months of administrative delay in a process that he described as, quoting Pat Murphy, "turning into harassment," he finally received his SBA loan.

Why does a small business that has existed for 66 years have to go through 8½ months of a painful process, which they term "harassment," in order to get a loan after a disaster and come back into business, from the very agency whose sole purpose is to be able to provide that kind of assistance? The worst part is that Pat Murphy will tell you he is one of the lucky ones. He actually received a loan, and he knows a whole bunch of folks who are still waiting around for that money.

Some may have heard that the administration brags about that \$9 billion of disaster loans they have approved. But as I said, only one-ninth of that, only \$1 billion, has found its way into the hands of people. Why can't you deliver the checks? If you approve it, why can't you make sure people get it right away? Mr. President, 11 percent of the funding has actually reached the people who are asking for it. In addition, what is more, about half of those who applied for disaster loans were denied. What are they going to do? All these folks who have been denied loans have nowhere to turn.

If you are serious about revitalizing New Orleans, you have to be willing to put that money into their hands. One of the biggest problems they have is capital, being able to pay some people for a period of time so they can stay. For people who need to put food on the table and take care of their kids, if there is no certainty as to that availability of money, they are going to go somewhere. They have to go somewhere. What happens is the fabric of New Orleans gets destroyed because people put down their roots somewhere else.

For those who have been fortunate enough to receive housing assistance, they are living in front of their damaged homes, many of them in trailers that are sitting on concrete blocks. What is the problem with that? Let me tell you what the problem is. No. 1, the trailers FEMA is providing cost \$70,000 a piece. They are not permanent.

Hurricane season starts in a few weeks. The National Weather Service is predicting 14 named storms to hit the gulf during this next hurricane season. I might add that they were accurate last year in the number of named storms they predicted. Do you know what is going to happen when the wind hits, 90 miles an hour, 100 miles an hour or more? Those trailers are going to blow around, and they are going to create more damage.

I am told by people in New Orleans you could have built modular housing for less money with greater permanency. If you had been smart about this, you could have set up a village of modular housing for people who are working on their permanent housing, you could create lumber distribution centers, you could bring carpenters from around the country, plumbers, electricians. Labor unions from all around the country would be willing to donate, come down and live in a special village and then to rebuild. None of that kind of basic organization effort that America is supposed to be so good at—that we are so good at, when led—is taking place.

I want to know what kind of leadership spends \$900 million to buy 25,000 manufactured homes and 1,300 modular homes and they can't be used because FEMA rules say they are too big or unsafe in a flood zone. Bureaucracy, lack of imagination, lack of willingness to do what it takes—which is what the President said we would do in Jackson Square.

What type of leadership spends \$249 million to secure 8,136 cruise ship cabins for 6 months at a cost that Inspector General Richard Skinner estimated at \$5,100 a month per passenger, six times the cost of renting a two-bedroom apartment?

Eight months after the promises were made, New Orleans has only one level 1 trauma center. The largest medical complex, Charity Hospital, needs to be rebuilt, but FEMA will only fund repairs, so they are not going to rebuild, or can't yet.

So what do the residents of New Orleans do during the coming hurricane season if one of those named storms is severe? Eight months after promises were made to expand local business participation in the recovery, guess what, FEMA is continuing its business model of hiring megacontractors to oversee the recovery efforts. Why is it that debris removal contract dollars aren't making it to the local businesses? We had one particular guy who has been in business for I think it was 27 years. He does tree removal and tree work. He has not been used. In fact, he was called and told by FEMA that they are using an outside contractor. He is one of the people trying to stay, and they are going to take his business away for somebody out of State.

Why are so many local contractors waiting for FEMA to pay them millions of dollars for work they have already completed?

Last Thursday, the Senate passed an emergency spending bill that includes \$2.2 billion for levee reconstruction in southeast Louisiana, \$1.5 billion for Orleans Parish levee projects, and \$1.3 billion for the disaster loan program. Senator LANDRIEU and I offered—I cosponsored an amendment that she proposed—two amendments. One was to ensure the SBA sends up its disaster response plan to Congress before June 1, which is the start of the 2006 hurricane season; and second, to require the SBA to report to Congress monthly on the status of the disaster loan program now and after future disasters.

Senator LANDRIEU, Senator SNOWE, and I also cosponsored an amendment by Senator VITTER that declares areas hit by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as historically underutilized business zones—HUBZones, as we call them. It makes sure, though, that small, local businesses will get first consideration for Federal contracts. This is something we have been trying to get done since last September. We put that on the floor of the Senate right after the hurricane, and still it has taken the Congress to this day to get this done.

But that is only part of the story. We passed bipartisan legislation which offers a more comprehensive approach to help get small businesses back on their feet. Let me tell you what we wanted to do. We wanted to give some small businesses grants—not loans, grants—because clearly those small businesses are going to need a tide-over period of time until you can get a population back that is going to begin to use them. If you are serious about keeping the integrity of this city and you are serious about rebuilding it and allowing those citizens who have been told they will have the opportunity to stay there, to stay there, you have to give them some money. They can't repay the loans if they can't do the business right now.

How much money have we spent in Iraq that is going to turn out to be a grant versus what is happening down in New Orleans, to our own citizens.

The Senate passed that legislation. I will tell you what, it has been blocked. It has been blocked since we passed it after Hurricane Katrina. There has not even been a serious effort, despite our efforts, Senator SNOWE and mine, to try to get some sort of negotiation on it—not even serious. It was dropped from the 2006 CJS conference, and now it is waiting for action as a free-standing bill. This legislation includes essential bridge loans and the grants that would help those suffering the most to be able to keep their doors open so you do maintain the integrity of New Orleans.

The Senate has yet to take action on a bill introduced by Senator LANDRIEU which I cosponsored to follow on this other bill which has additional provisions, recognizing the situation and the needs on the ground. There is no excuse for us not making every good-faith effort possible, in a bipartisan way, to do

what makes sense if we are going to keep faith with those folks and with all of our citizens, to whom this sends a message.

I don't want to just talk about the slow response. I think we have to find a way to get some urgency here. The businesses in the gulf coast cannot and should not have to face bureaucratic redtape and delays. They will not be able to last much longer. Many of the businesses that didn't have business interruption insurance are already gone. Many others are on the verge of closing unless they are able to secure financial assistance in an expedited manner. These companies cannot survive on empty promises. What Louisiana and Mississippi need, obviously, is a level of leadership that is prepared to break through the bureaucracy and come together and create the ingenuity and creativity to rebuild the region.

There are a lot of Americans who would be prepared to volunteer time if you want to organize them. That could be done. You could have a civilian assistance corps of experts who are willing to undergo some hardship for a period of time, live in tough circumstances—a tent city or whatever it is—to lend their expertise to helping to rebuild and do certain things. There are all kinds of ways you could do more cleanup and more rebuilding in an expedited fashion.

The fact is, we saw after Katrina, when the National Guard was there—I give them great credit. Under General Honore, a career soldier in the Army, he showed what strong leadership, what a hierarchal organization with clear lines of command, what a real structure could bring. In those areas where the National Guard did cleanup and did immediate work, a great deal happened. That is what should have continued. But guess what. They have gone. I thought we were going to stay as long as it takes. I thought we were going to do whatever it takes. Those are the words of the President. But they are gone. They could be there today still doing things if we had the will.

New Orleans is one of the great cities of our country. It has an amazing history, a diverse and ethnically rich population, and great culture. I think every American has a stake in its resurrection.

I thank Senator LANDRIEU again for inviting me there for a firsthand look. I really thought I was going to see something very different. I know there have been about 40 Senators or more who have gone down there at one point or another. They have seen a lot of this with their own eyes. It just defies my sense of what the possibilities are in our country. With all of the unbelievable equipment we have, with all of the skilled labor we have, with the volunteer spirit of our Nation, it is stunning to me that we are not proceeding more rapidly to do for New Orleans what New Orleans needs.

My hope is that we will pass those bills I talked about and that over these

next 8 months, over the next months, we can ramp up.

Everybody said never again. I will tell you what is happening in New Orleans today. The images people saw at the Superdome, of people who felt abandoned, who didn't have adequate shelter, while misjudgments were being made around them by those who were supposed to be responsible, is actually being repeated at this very moment.

There is a Superdome II taking place in New Orleans today, for those citizens who can't get back on their feet, who don't know what to do with their property, for the 70 percent of the city that has no basic services, for the people who cannot move because of the debris or the garbage, the people who don't have a prayer of getting their home going again or their business going again because of the lack of adequacy of the housing and a clear plan that says to them with certainty that there is a future. Right now, that future for a lot of folks is very difficult.

One of the problems I heard about from a number of responsible people—there were chamber folks there and other folks there—is the mental health issue. There are a lot of citizens who have been living under an extraordinary level of stress since Hurricane Katrina. Some of them have lost family members. Almost all are struggling to pay bills. It is hard to think about the future. That stress takes its toll.

I was told how crime is rising, about how the sense of despair is taking a greater toll, and how there is going to be a larger mental health problem within that region, as a consequence of the lack of adequacy of response and the plight in which people find themselves.

We can do better. I think everybody here knows we can do better.

We have strong leaders in this country. We have excellent generals and military personnel. They know how to manage. We have business leaders who run extraordinary companies, who understand the hierarchy and understand how to get things done. Clearly, FEMA doesn't, and clearly whatever the structure is that is there, it is inadequate to get the job done.

My hope and prayer is that we can deliver on the promises to New Orleans and turn this around.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HEALTH WEEK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we will be closing shortly. I take the opportunity before doing so to comment on two issues. One is the event of the last